

award the Presidential Medal of Freedom—the country’s highest civilian honor—to Gordon Hirabayashi, who openly defied this forced relocation, and bravely took his challenge all the way to the United States Supreme Court.

This year, we also commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first Japanese cherry blossom trees planted in Washington, D.C., an enduring symbol of the friendship shared between the United States and Japan and a reminder of America’s standing as a Pacific nation. Over the centuries, we have maintained a long, rich history of engagement in the Asia-Pacific region, and our AAPI communities have been essential to strengthening the economic, political, and social bonds we share with our partners around the world.

This month, we reflect on the indelible ways AAPI communities have shaped our national life. As we celebrate centuries of trial and triumph, let us rededicate ourselves to making our Nation a place that welcomes the contributions of all people, all colors, and all creeds, and ensures the American dream is within reach for all who seek it.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2012 as Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month. I call upon all Americans to visit [www.AsianPacificHeritage.gov](http://www.AsianPacificHeritage.gov) to learn more about the history of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, and to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

#### **Proclamation 8807 of May 1, 2012**

#### **National Building Safety Month, 2012**

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

In neighborhoods and workplaces across America, professionals throughout government and industry work to implement building safety solutions that strengthen resilience and meet community needs. By designing and implementing state-of-the-art building safety, energy efficiency, and fire prevention codes and standards, they help save lives and prevent disruption in the wake of disaster. Resilient infrastructure is essential to an America built to last, and during National Building Safety Month, we recommit to strengthening our Nation’s ability to withstand the threats and hazards we face.

My Administration is committed to advancing that mission. With leadership from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, we continue to develop robust public-private partnerships that help communities prepare for, withstand, and recover from disasters. We are drawing upon cutting edge

science and technology to establish stronger codes and standards for disaster resilience. And moving forward, we must promote research and development that will drive innovation in construction and retrofitting techniques. I encourage all Americans to visit [www.Ready.gov](http://www.Ready.gov) to learn more about preparedness and find out how to get involved.

Whether protecting our communities from fires, floods, earthquakes, severe storms, or other disasters, building safety professionals play a critical role in making America safe, strong, and sustainable. This month, we celebrate their work, and we rededicate ourselves to ensuring our Nation remains ready and resilient.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim May 2012 as National Building Safety Month. I encourage citizens, government agencies, private businesses, nonprofit organizations, and other interested groups to join in activities that will increase awareness of building safety, and I further urge Americans to learn more about how they can contribute to building safety at home and in their communities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of May, in the year of our Lord two thousand twelve, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-sixth.

BARACK OBAMA

#### **Proclamation 8808 of May 1, 2012**

#### **National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, 2012**

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

In July 1961, President John F. Kennedy remarked that “the strength of our democracy and our country is really no greater in the final analysis than the well-being of our citizens.” He envisioned a renewed national commitment to leading a more active and vigorous life—to pursuing health of mind and body in equal proportion. Over half a century later, that call to action still rings true. During National Physical Fitness and Sports Month, we rededicate ourselves to empowering Americans young and old with the tools to pursue a healthy lifestyle.

From the classroom to the court, countless Americans enrich their lives and their health by getting active. Regular physical activity promotes strong mental and physical development, builds lean muscle, and plays an essential role in maintaining a healthy weight. Coupled with nutritious meals, it can help prevent a wide variety of chronic diseases, including cancer, heart disease, and stroke—three leading causes of death in the United States. Yet, with inactivity and obesity continuing to put millions at risk, we know we must do more to help individuals, families, and communities across our Nation make exercise an easy, accessible part of daily life.